



The Witness

Catholic School of Evangelisation Australia Inc.

March 2024 Newsletter

What were you doing February/March 1994 ?

I was with a group of over 50 people coming from as far north as Cairns, as far south as Hobart and as far west as Perth. We were at St Benedict's Parish, Burwood attending the very first English-speaking school of evangelisation in the world. The St Andrew's School of Evangelisation, based in Mexico, sent Javier Silva to deliver "John the Beloved" and "Paul the Intrepid Evangelist".

Yes, 30 years ago we were introduced to the 2Tim.2:2 aims of the St Andrew's School - *"What you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well."* The School of Evangelisation was formed there in March 1994 and eventually Bishop Joe Grech gained approval for the name to be "Catholic School of Evangelisation".

The CSOE spread across Australia, ministering in each state and territory. Teams visited New Zealand, New Guinea and four missions to the Philippines took place in 1995, 1996, 2017 and 2018. Courses presented on Zoom here in Australia, have reached even further afield, UK, Canada, India, Philippines and the Highlands of Papua New Guinea.

Finally, I would like to personally invite you all to a special Mass of celebration and thanksgiving for the 30 years of the SOE Witnessing to the love of God for all people. So please come and join other CSOE participants at:

St Thomas the Apostle, 251 Diamond Creek Road, North Greensborough.
Thursday 21st March 2024,
Praise and worship 7.30pm, Mass 8pm.

Remember the catch phrase:

What time is it? Well, it is always the time to evangelise and also time to come together to thank God for the past 30 years.

Sandra Bishop

Participants at the first course in 1994 with Bishop Joe.



Participants Moses 1994



Melbourne 1996



The Witness

This newsletter is published by the Catholic School of Evangelisation Australia Inc.

ABN 133199185

Published three times a year.

Committee of Management:

Sandra Bishop	- Director
Jo Giudice	- Deputy Director
Emilia Sacchetta	- Secretary
Sam Giudice	- Treasurer

Vacant	- Editor
Julianne Hoffard	- Publisher

Please direct all correspondence to:

The Director:
Sandra Bishop

Email: sandraellenbishop@gmail.com

*Check out information about the
Catholic School of Evangelisation
on our web page:*

www.schoolofevangelisation.org.au

Post, email or fax your articles of an evangelistic nature, personal testimonies, jokes, news items, photos, advertisements, competitions, Bible trivia etc. to the Editor at the above address or
email: janinepwitten@gmail.com

The Director and other members of the National Executive Committee of the Catholic School of Evangelisation do not necessarily endorse opinions expressed in articles within this publication.

Catholic School of Evangelisation **MISSION STATEMENT**

To contribute to the formation of evangelising parishes by offering a formation program which:

- ▶ FORMS DISCIPLES
- ▶ TRAINS EVANGELISERS
- ▶ ESTABLISHES PARISH EVANGELISATION TEAMS

NEWS FROM OUR TREASURER

The Catholic School of Evangelisation can continue because of the generosity of its participants. Covid changed the way we have been able to operate and for a short while closed our doors, but thanks to technology and a bit of innovation from the team we were able to continue via Zoom.

Zoom opened the opportunity for more people around Australia and from all over the world to join in on our courses. We have participants from overseas, including: Philippines, India, UK, and PNG.

Because of the interest of PNG and the Philippines, some of our team members have gone over to these countries to train their members to give our courses and in July 2023 a delegate from the Philippines & PNG came over for some intense courses (funded by the School).

Because of this outreach, our expenses have increased substantially. I am sure you would be aware of the cost of travel, insurance etc... The cost of living has also had an impact on our expenses, insurance, various licenses necessary to operate have also gone up. But the call to continue the CSOE, both locally and abroad is strong, so we again thank you all for your generosity in giving to the School, enabling us to spread the Word of God to all reaches of the world and may God continue to bless you.

Should you wish to make a direct deposit, the details are as follows:

**Catholic School of Evangelisation,
Bendigo Bank, BSB 633 000, Account no.153553003**

Sam Giudice

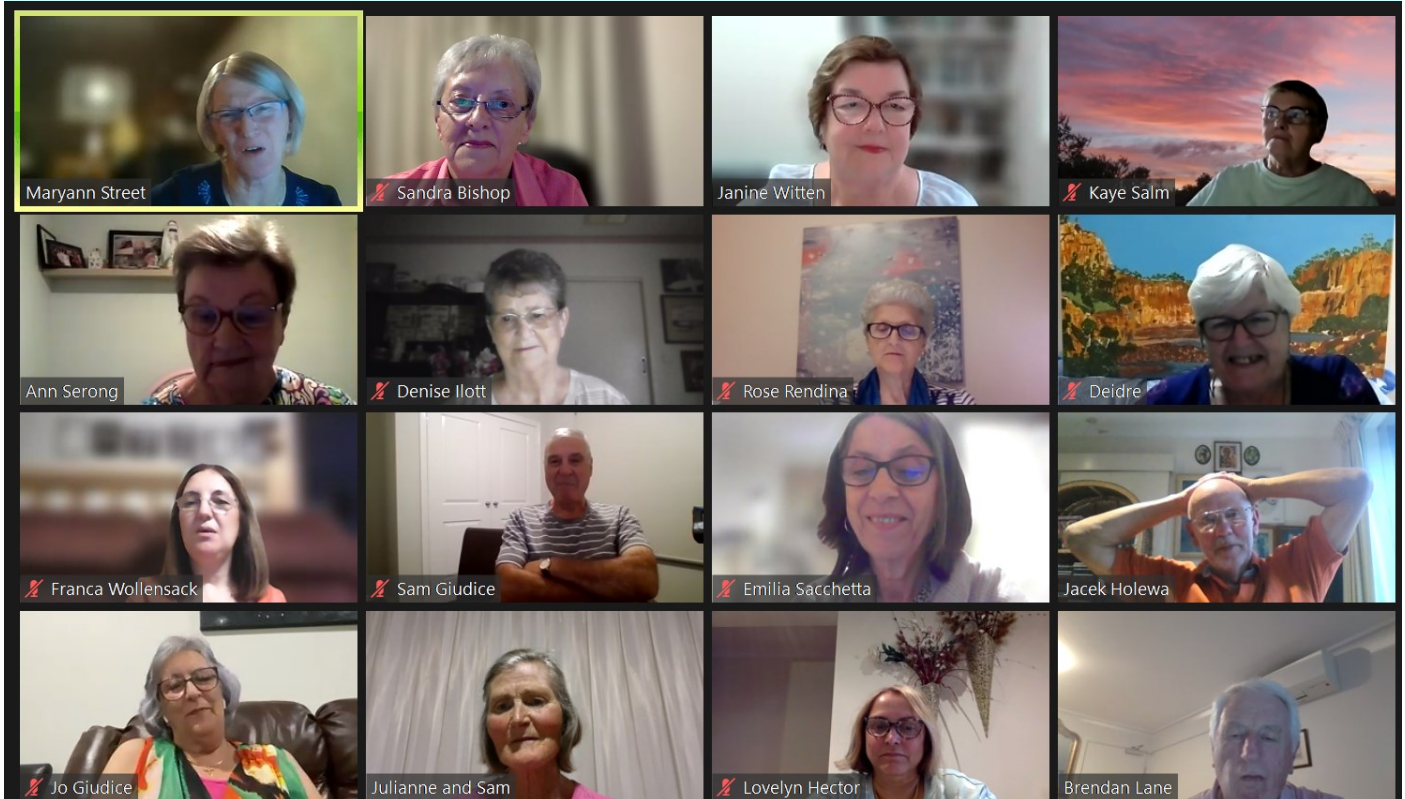
The Extraordinary meeting concluded with the following prayer: (see P.3 re meeting)



A Thirteenth Century Dominican Blessing

May God the Father bless us.
May God the Son heal us.
May God the Holy Spirit enlighten us,
And give us eyes to see with,
Ears to hear with,
Hands to do the work of God with,
Feet to walk with,
A mouth to preach the word of salvation with, and
The angel of peace to watch over us,
And lead us at last, by our Lord's gift, to the Kingdom.
Amen

Extraordinary Meeting



Since COVID there have been a few changes which have somewhat impacted the method in which the School operates and the Team is constantly looking at ways to reach out and evangelise in this modern and ever changing world.

But alas, as the Lord our God constantly assures us, there is no need to fear.

Isaiah 43:19 *“I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”*

There have also been some changes to the Committee of Management (COM). Over the past few months, the COM expressed their desire to step down from their roles to follow a new path in which they feel they have been led to by the Spirit. An Extraordinary General Meeting of members was subsequently held on 16th February 2024 in which a new committee of management was appointed. On behalf of all the members and all our readers and fellow Witnesses, I take this opportunity to sincerely thank the retiring members for their tireless commitment to the SOE over the years.

I wish to also thank the new elected COM members for accepting their roles and look forward to working with you as together we endeavour to continue the legacy of Bishop Joe Grech in such challenging times.

Retiring COM Members:

Director	Maryann Street
Deputy Director	Ann Serong
Secretary	Janine Witten
Treasurer	Jacek Holewa

New elected COM Members:

Director	Sandra Bishop
Deputy Director	Jo Giudice
Secretary	Emilia Sacchetta
Treasurer	Sam Giudice

On behalf of everyone I take this opportunity to not only thank Fr Brendan Lane for his role as chaplain and his support of the SOE for approximately 10 years, but also to congratulate him on his retirement after 50 years of Priesthood and service to the people of God. Fr Brendan will continue to serve as chaplain to the SOE.

Thank you to our committed team, most of whom are pictured above. They Zoom in every six weeks to pray for the CSOE, and are very active not only as presenters but especially as ‘behind the scene’ volunteers, who give of their time to assist in many ways ensuring that courses run smoothly. Last, but not least, thank you to all the E-prayer people for your prayer support over the years.

I look forward to serving and working with you in whatever way God directs us, all for his honour and glory.

Jo Giudice

Greetings from Goroka, PNG . . . By Fr. Adam Samsel

We had our Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Firmin Rodriguez in Goroka for 3 days. On Sunday 22nd October he blessed our group of evangelizers on Mission Sunday and liturgical memorial of St. John Paul II, the great missionary to many countries. We have fifty people from different parishes who are willing to evangelize, to share their belief. Thank you for your magnificent contribution to forming this group.



Photo left:

**Bendigo
'Eucharist'
course
participants,
October 2023.**

Apologies to those
who were called into
work and missed
from the image .

HEBREW LETTERS ZOOMED



Pictured above: Some of the live participants at the Jan/Feb "Reflecting on the Hebrew Letters" Zoom course. Not pictured are those who received the video recordings, thus enabling them to watch when their time suited.

Livestream participant shared recordings

The Hebrew Letters course helped me understand the world of the chosen people, their culture, and how they loved Adonai, the LORD, or Elohim. Every session, made me speechless particularly when the meaning of the letters was laid to us through the painting. The conference encouraged me to read reflectively and repeatedly the sacred scriptures, pray silently, and be grateful for the input we shared. I am eager to share this with the catechists and my fellow sisters in the congregation.

Thanks to the organizer, particularly to Sandra for sending a recorded conference so that I can review it well before imparting it to the group where I am working. It is very timely that this course was designed before and during Lent, I am using it for my spiritual enrichment. May God reward you all and the CSOE.

Sr Anselm Pedrosa,
San Fernando City, La Union, Philippines.

Livestream participant

What a wonderful journey of learning the Hebrew Aleph Beit Sandra and Judy have taken me on! I thoroughly enjoyed Sandra's reflections on Judy's beautiful art works, and learning so much about the Jewish people from a Catholic perspective. I feel blessed to have been able to attend the live sessions and sad this journey has ended. I was left wanting to learn more!

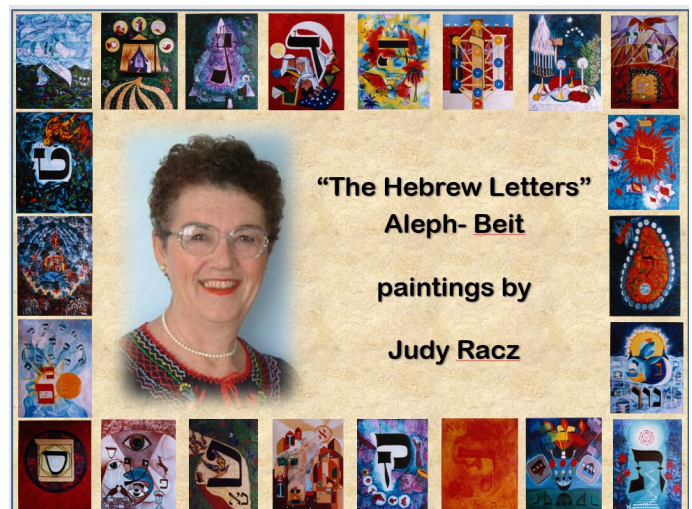
Thank you Judy, Sandra and Emilia!
Pennie Bishop, Somers, Victoria.

Post livestream participant

I was very fortunate that Sandra forwarded me the relevant information. I truly became so engrossed, as I especially like to learn more about a subject that I hadn't heard before. Discerning it all is another matter. Very appropriate also just when our Lenten Season was starting. Just discovering the Hebrew Letters shows me there is 'a voice from above' calling to me 'it's time' now to be the person I was born to be. Jesus will Light my Way.

Thanks again for this special opportunity.

Joy Therese Loau, Broken Bay Diocese, Sydney.



'John the Beloved' at Imus, Cavite, Philippines, December 2023



A Lighthouse of Change

By Sam Julian O. Espadilla

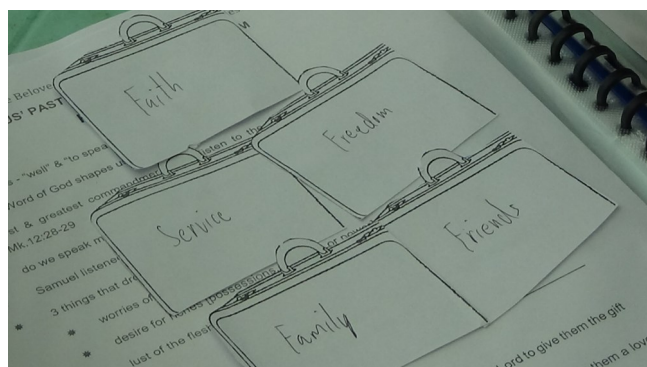
The program contributed not only to the enhancement of my leadership and interpersonal abilities but, most importantly, to my overall growth as a disciple of Jesus. As I embarked on this course, I anticipated gaining insights into the life and teachings of 'John the Beloved'. However, what unfolded surpassed my expectations. The course provided much more than just a traditional educational experience from the beginning; it turned into a spiritual journey that has impacted my view of discipleship and strengthened my relationship with Jesus.

One of the remarkable aspects of the course was its holistic approach to personal development. While honing my leadership and interpersonal skills, When I first saw the announcement that the course was open, it was like a light just switched on in my heart. I knew that I needed to attend the course, I knew it was for me. I was supposed to go with my friends, but unfortunately they canceled at the last minute due to reasons. I was supposed to cancel too but I just knew it wasn't right. I was scared at first because I did not know anyone in that course, I only had myself. But, it gave me opportunities to communicate and socialize more with the other people in the course. I set aside my timidity and interacted with them.

This formation course has not only helped my total formation but also built up my independence and confidence. An important part of my experience was also the community component of the course. The environment was supportive as we interacted with one another, shared our insights, roleplayed and encouraged one another in our spiritual pursuits. One of my favorite activity is

the one where we wrote a letter of forgiveness to a person we have hurt and to a person who has hurt us. After that, we had the choice to burn the letters. I burned mine because I knew I can't give or keep those letters for some reason. So, I burned it and let the smoke reach God carrying the message written on the paper and prayed that Jesus will be the one to pass the message to those people I forgave and asked forgiveness. It truly took a heavy burden off my chest and has made my soul and life come into a calm place.

Overall, I could clearly use the course material in my day-to-day activities. I discovered that I was more resilient than ever before and that I understood the concepts of love and compassion on a deeper level. I will bring forever in life the things that I have learned, shared, and experienced in this course. The 'John the Beloved' course has been a lighthouse of change, influencing not just my cerebral knowledge of discipleship but also my innermost thoughts. I am so appreciative that I had the chance to go on this journey, and I will keep the things I've learned in mind as I continue to walk life's path with a fresh sense of direction and spiritual clarity.



‘John the Beloved’ at Imus, Cavite, Philippines, December 2023

Unexpected Blessing

By Katrina Michel C. Panaglima

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Lord for giving me and leading me to take this opportunity to experience such a marvelous formation course. Secondly, I would like to thank the Saints of Today organization for accepting me and making me a part of the Mission. I would never get to experience such a life-changing event if it weren't for them and the people involved.

I was not even sure of partaking in the ‘John the Beloved’ formation course. The schedule was clashing with our academic priorities such as our Finals Exams but in some way, I felt that I really needed to go and set aside some time for this. There was something telling me that I should remain committed and focus on Him despite everything that's been happening to me. I am facing many obstacles and trials that I often question. I am slowly realizing how hard it is to face life and its realities therefore I realized through this, that there's more to life than school.

I often complain about everything. I carelessly forget at times that I should be grateful and see the good in it rather than the bad. A new and good perspective of life was shown to me upon taking the ‘John the Beloved’ formation course. I was surrounded by amazing people with pure hearts that are willing to listen and commit themselves too. I was inspired. It motivated me that I too can do it.

There were only a few of us but somehow it didn't matter because we were all in it together. I wouldn't have enjoyed this 3-day course without our amazing facilitators; Ms. Wency Provideo and Ramille Ibarra. I am very grateful to have met them and I can personally say that I am very well pleased with how they delivered and guided us throughout the course. I also would like to thank the people responsible for funding this course which includes the food and the materials needed. I really enjoyed the fact that we were well taken care of.

I really enjoyed the activities given after each session and even felt a bit emotional on the third day of this course. It was a really heart warming experience and I did not regret it at all that I took this course. I looked forward to it every morning and left each day with a satisfied soul and a smile on my face. It did not interfere with my academic priorities but rather helped me more and made me become a better person.

I firmly believe that this course is valuable and worth taking. I hope you get the opportunity to experience what I had. It was worth it. God bless us all!

The Impact Of John The Beloved Course In My Life

By: Abbygale Felice Nomo

‘John The Beloved’ course has been transformative in narrating my life experiences. Through its teachings and insights, I've gained a deeper understanding of my journey, discovering meaningful connections between seemingly disparate events. The course provided a framework for reflection, enabling me to articulate my experiences with clarity and purpose. John The Beloved's guidance has not only enriched my personal narrative but has also empowered me to share my story in a way that resonates with others, fostering a sense of connection and empathy.



Transformative Journeys

By: Princess Megan D. Dela Cruz

Before attending the ‘John the Beloved’ course, I was hesitant because of my upcoming exams, but something led me that said I should attend the course. Taking the ‘John the Beloved’ course has been a truly transformative experience for me. I found myself involved in a journey of self-discovery and personal progress from the very first class.

The course not only provided valuable insights into many aspects of life, but it also provided practical tools to help me overcome problems and improve my general well-being. One of the most impactful aspects of the course was its focus on adopting love as a guiding principle and developing an optimistic outlook. This change of viewpoint has greatly impacted my day-to-day interactions, affecting how I handle obstacles, relationships, and even my own self-talk. I've also gained new perspectives through sharing experiences and I was able to create new friendships.

Looking back on my journey with the ‘John the Beloved’ course, I can confidently say that it has left an indelible mark on my life. I am grateful to have attended this course as I have gained wisdom that brought positive changes to me.

'John the Beloved' at Imus, Cavite, Philippines, December 2023

From Learner to Disciple: My Three-Day Journey into Discipleship

By: Jean Marie Guevarra

Embarking on the 'John The Beloved' formation of disciples course was a transformative experience for me as I sought a closer connection with God. Contrary to any reservations one might have, this course proved to be far from a mere time-waster. Amidst a hectic schedule, especially with exams looming, attending the course not only proved manageable but also exceptionally rewarding.

From the outset, the organizers ensured a smooth beginning by presenting us with clear folders in our favorite colors for the handouts containing our course outlines and engaging written activities. Personalized IDs, which we customized with colored pens and markers, added a unique touch, fostering a sense of identity throughout the three-day journey. Thoughtful details such as snacks, drinks, and scheduled breaks further enhanced the overall comfort of the experience.

Over this brief span, we immersed ourselves in the life of Jesus, unraveling the layers of his master plan for universal salvation and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Crucial insights into discipleship, Jesus's meticulous selection criteria for disciples, and the four conditions of discipleship were explored. As disciples of Jesus, we began to grasp the profound significance of the six relationships integral to our spiritual journey. Our Bible became our trusted sidekick during the course, guiding us through Gospel readings and offering verses relevant to our exploration. The narratives weren't merely informative; they were captivating and reflective, adding an enjoyable dimension to the entire experience.

What elevated the course to another level were the interactive activities. Engaging in skits allowed us to step into the shoes of Israel's Masters, with the added opportunity to portray Jesus as the Master. Clay molding provided a creative outlet, allowing us to symbolize our life with God in tangible forms. Written activities, equally enjoyable, prompted thoughtful responses and introspection.

The course didn't confine itself to traditional methods; instead, we watched videos depicting biblical scenes and explored images of Jesus' disciples, churches, stories, and more—all seamlessly connected to our present day. Yet, the true highlight was the camaraderie fostered through these activities. Sharing skills, socializing with

fellow members, we departed each day with smiles and a profound sense of fulfillment.

To crown our experience, we received certificates, symbolizing our graduation from the formation course. As we left, we were not just filled with newfound knowledge but also with the assurance that we had drawn closer to God and had become modern disciples of Christ.

In conclusion, my genuine enjoyment of the course prompted deep reflection on my faith, and I would willingly participate again. Learning about the opportunity to become helpers in the next session, joining the organizers, is a role I would gladly embrace to lend a hand if they choose to organize this event once more. The journey from learner to disciple was indeed a remarkable one, and I look forward to continuing this transformative path.



The 'John the Beloved' course was an enlightening and enjoyable experience. I gained knowledge on how to become closer to God and the truth of His Eternal Kingdom. I also made friends with those who attended the course.

Wilfred Nigel Rabanal

Senior Club Evangelisation

I belong to a large local Seniors' Club which has a mega variety of activities. I concentrate on the gymnasium. One popular activity is day long bus trips. One calendar year I participated in six such trips so sat alongside six strangers.

At this point I need to give some background. I was a suicidal depressive; this was brought about by being rejected by my father at birth as he wanted a second daughter. There was much verbal and physical abuse including being thrashed regularly with wooden dowels giving me bruising from ankles to posterior. There was sexual abuse by a close neighbour at age eight in a nearby park, where my father came upon the scene and screamed at me with the words, "You wicked boy!" I had no idea what was happening, just didn't like it. There was much bullying at school, and a further sexual attack in a train at age fifteen by a group of boys. Although I always attended Eucharist, it was meaningless to me. I never prayed nor read the Bible and couldn't care less. Sometimes in the back pew, I played poker with a mini pack of cards during the sermon.

One day, I walked towards a train entering my railway station. My intention was to jump, but I chickened out. The following Sunday, 16 December 1973, I looked at the cross in the church and in desperation cried out: "Jesus if you are real then show yourself to me... and I want exactly the same as what the apostles received at Pentecost." The statue smiled which jolted me, but more was to follow. As I received the Sacred Host in Communion a burning heat enveloped my whole body. I was instantly healed of the depression, was flooded by the Holy Spirit, and given four deep charisms: Faith, Evangelisation, Intercessory Prayer, and Healing which I have used ever since.

Now back to the story of the 6 strangers on the picnic bus trips. The first three were ladies who each gave me their email addresses to send the Eucharist story. I added in a handful of my other thirty testimonies (God has been good to me). The fourth was a self-proclaimed ex-Catholic man who did not have a computer. No problem... he gave me his postal address. The fifth was a lady who did not want to divulge her email address, but was interested in what I was saying. When I told her I had thirty stories, she countered we would be sitting together for two and a half hours so, go ahead. I accepted her invitation. The sixth was Tom (not his real name) and the day trip was to Twin Towns Services Club situated on the New South Wales side of the border road with Queensland. It was dinner and a show.

We talked about sport on the trip down. One of the songs in the Twin Towns show was "Jesus Christ Superstar." Good opportunity for an entry. On the trip home I asked Tom if he enjoyed the show. YES. Did he have a favourite song? NO. I responded that one of my favourite songs was used.

Tom took the bait and asked the name. My response: "Jesus Christ Superstar because Jesus Christ is a Superstar in my life. This is what He has done for me." I related the Eucharist story plus the time when my now late wife Mollie was a chronic asthmatic and asked me to ring 000 for an ambulance because it was the worst attack she had ever had. I did not sense it was the right move, so I prayed with her first. Mollie was instantly healed and told me to forget the phone call. Tom commented it was an interesting story and changed the topic. (I have a separate story on this which is amazing. Well worth reading.)

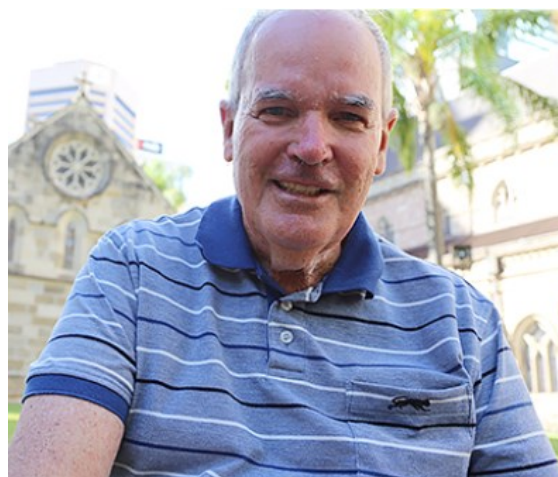
I pray as follows when I evangelise. "Holy Spirit I have sown a seed, I now hand over to You to find someone to water it."

Here are two very brief prayers I say to kick start my prayer for the day. After an act of contrition, the first is: "Jesus I surrender my life completely to You this day and offer myself to be used by You for the up-building of the Kingdom." (This can be a risky prayer!)

The second is: "Holy Spirit if you want me to evangelise anyone today, then you organise for them to cross my path and I will do the talking." I stopped counting over two years ago when I had been given over six hundred email addresses. I discovered long term that six out of every ten would give me their email address. (This is written August 2022)

I will finish with an injection of humour. Mollie had a scan and the specialist asked her how her asthma was going. Mollie responded she did not have asthma and did not take any medication for it. The specialist disagreed showing a mark on the scan. Mollie told the story and the specialist was very confused!!

If you wish to contact Mike via email: mmdooley@bigpond.net.au



Mike attended the "Paul" course in Brisbane, 1995.

‘GOD’S PRESENCE—OUR PRESENT’ at Jiwaka, Mt Hagen, PNG, March, 2024.

This course follows on from a ‘Philip—New Life’ course Fr Adam presented last December at Jiwaka, which is 2½ hours west of his base at Goroka.

The outreach to the neighbouring Diocese was not without challenges. Three days without power, a generator that could not work full time, meaning no PowerPoint presentations for some sessions. On the return trip, (150km from Goroka) they encountered a hold up and lost one smart phone.

Fr Adam hopes these participants will form an Evangelisation Team in the Diocese of Mt Hagen, and that the difficulties will be out-matched by the production of abundant fruit.



THE LONG AWAITED ACCEPTANCE!

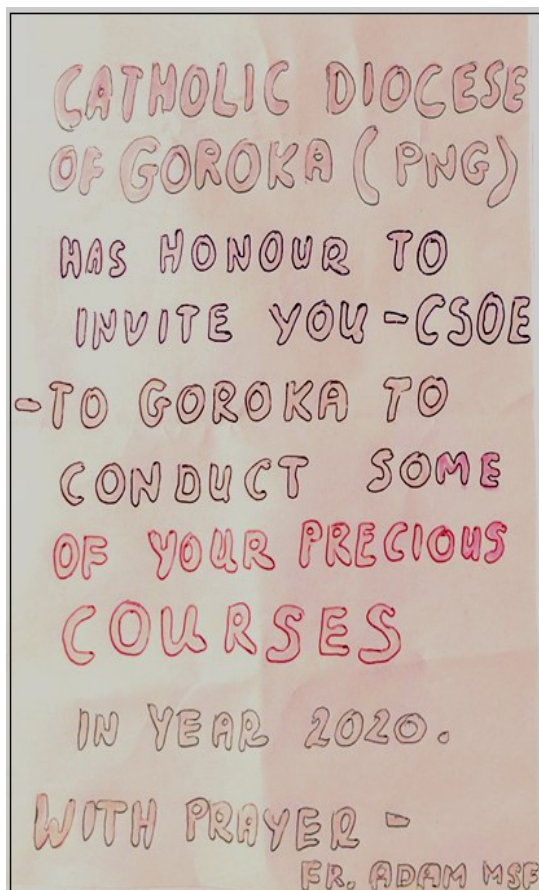
Fr Adam Samsel, left with me this invitation before he returned to Goroka, PNG in 2019 after attending CSOE courses here in Melbourne. It remained on my clipboard. Over the years he has extended similar invitations during our contact via email and Whatsapp. Again when Fr Adam attended the CSOE intensives last year in Melbourne, he would ask, “When are you coming to PNG?” I would answer, “I’m not going on my own and at present I can’t get anyone to agree to go.” (Believe me I have asked many.)

Roll on five years after the initial invitation, when a couple of months ago, I had a very vivid dream that Fr Wahid Riad and I were in PNG presenting courses. I sent Fr Wahid a text to that effect and received no immediate response. I must admit, I was somewhat relieved. My relief was short-lived. A few days later, he phoned me and said “When are we going?”

Fr Adam is very excited, and plans for 36-40 young people (4 from each parish) to attend ‘John the Beloved’, in accordance with their pastoral plan for a ‘Year of Youth’. Then ‘Moses’ is to be presented to a similar number of parish leaders.

We leave Monday 8th April 7am flight and if all goes to plan return 8.40pm Thursday 18th April, thus Fr Wahid will only need a supply priest for one weekend at his Castlemaine parish.

Please keep us, (including our families) and this ministry in your prayers. Sandra Bishop.



INVITATION to DISCOVER



7 YOUNG PEOPLE in the GOSPELS

Participants of all ages will relate to the examples of these young people, some made negative choices, some positive and one made several mistakes but didn't give up.

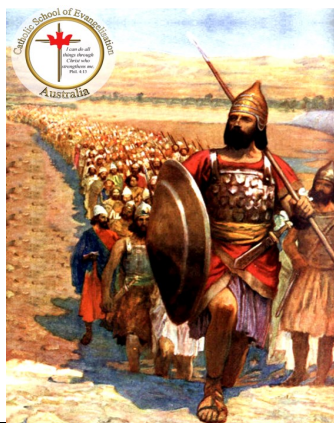
9am to 5pm, Sat 7 & Sun 8 Sept at

Loyola College, Watsonia

Adult \$40, Concession/Student \$20, Book before 3rd Sept

<https://www.trybooking.com/CPPNM>

GIDEON'S ARMY



A big THANK YOU to the generous people who have made a financial commitment to assist the ongoing running of the CSOE. Without you we would not be able to continue our mission which is our response to the last 4 Popes' call for a New Evangelisation.

To make arrangements for direct debit or to forward donations please contact:

Sam Giudice,
51 Cameron Parade, Bundoora, Vic. 3083.

Ph. 041 045 572;

Email: sam.giudice@bigpond.com

CSOE a/c Bendigo Bank BSB 633000 Account 153553003

please ENROL me in GIDEON'S ARMY ☐ please RENEW my GIDEON'S ARMY commitment ☐

NAME			
ADDRESS			
EMAIL			
PHONE			
payment enclosed	\$	Please forward details to make arrangements for monthly direct debit payments	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Please make cheques payable to: **Catholic School of Evangelisation**)

Catholic School of Evangelisation
 9 Pindari Dr
 St Helena, Vic 3088
 Ph 03 9434 7553

THE WITNESS

CATHOLIC SCHOOL OF EVANGELISATION PROGRAM 2024

8 th —19 th April	‘John the Beloved’ & ‘Moses’	Goroka, PNG
20 th April, 18 th May, 15 th June	‘Meet Mark, His Gospel, His Jesus’	Lectors & Commentators, Imus Parish, Philippines
7 th & 8 th September	‘7 Young People in the Gospel’	Loyola College, Watsonia. https://www.trybooking.com/CPPNM
???	‘James – Discerning’	Zoom
???	‘John the Beloved’ & ‘Eucharist’	Missionaries of Compassion Minor Seminary Kerala, India



October 2001

**Participants
 with Bishop Joe**